

The Randolph County Herald Tribune

Menard employee comes to aid of co-worker after crash



IDOC photo Bette Goetting

• **By Pete Spitler**
The Herald Tribune

• Nov. 5, 2014

Illinois Department of Corrections Spokesman Tom Shaer has confirmed a Menard Correctional Center employee was involved in a traffic accident that occurred on Route 3 in mid-October. October 14, Menard Correctional Center Warden Kim Butler was en route to work when she came upon a single vehicle rollover accident on Route 3.

Butler pulled over and turned on her emergency lights to alert other drivers of the accident. As she approached the vehicle, she immediately recognized Menard employee Bette Goetting standing in a muddy field, ankle deep in mud, on the phone with 911.

Goetting, who is an educator in Menard's Medium Security unit, was simultaneously talking to the dispatcher while calming the occupant of the car.

Goetting had witnessed the vehicle hydroplane on the pavement, roll several times and finally land upside-down in a nearby field.

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The occupant, MCC Correctional Officer Mike Ben-Avi, was pinned inside.

Ben-Avi had recently left the facility after working the 11 p.m to 7 a.m. shift and had to be extracted from the vehicle using the Jaws of Life. He suffered minor injuries and returned to work in less than a week, according to Shaer. No one was cited in the accident by authorities.

Later that same day, Butler received a call from the Murphysboro Police Department praising Goetting for her actions.

“Her professionalism in speaking with us, coupled with her compassion for her fellow employee, made a bad situation more bearable for the trapped officer,” said Murphysboro Police Department Sgt. Brian Brewer in a letter to Butler that was received Oct. 20. “I truly appreciate her bearing, allowing her to provide comfort to her fellow employee while informing us in this high-stress environment.”

Butler later spoke with Goetting and thanked her for assisting the motorist. No one was cited by police in the accident.